

Getting to Know: Terri Anderson

Note: This is a new series to introduce the Clark College community to fellow college employees. We want to tell stories about what you do when you are not at work: hobbies, interests, travels, volunteer work. Did you volunteer at an elephant preserve over the summer? Walk the Camino de Santiago? Climb a mountain? Learn to sail or flyfish or make cheese? Send your ideas to ComMark@clark.edu.



You might know Terri Anderson, program coordinator for the college's Dental Hygiene program. But did you know she ran in the Boston Marathon for the first time on April 17, 2023? Here's a fun Q&A to learn more about Terri's passion for running and her experience running the Boston Marathon.

Q: How long have you been running?

TA: I began running around 2001 after I joined a local gym, where I got into the sport of triathlon: swim, bike, run. I did triathlons for 17 years.

Q: What was your impetus to want to run in the Boston Marathon?

TA: A running friend had run the Boston Marathon for 14 years, but I wasn't interested. Then as time went by, I started looking at bucket list items and got this crazy idea to qualify for the Boston Marathon with my friend. This spring I ran my first Boston Marathon, while she did her 15th.

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TA: Certain marathons are qualifying races. They base your qualifying time on your gender and age. For me, I needed a 4:35 (4 hours, 35 minutes), but I wanted a cushion. I chose to go for a 4:20. I qualified with a 4:18 in the Newport, Oregon Marathon on June 4, 2022. I was very pleased. I got notified that I qualified and registered on the first day.

Q: *What was your first marathon?*

TA: My first two marathons were competing in Ironman Triathlons, competitions where you swim 2.4 miles, bike 112 miles and then run a marathon, which is 26.2 miles. My first Ironman was in Penticton, British Columbia in 2011. I ran the Portland Marathon in 2013 to see if I could qualify for Boston, but I started out too fast and I hit the wall with five miles to go. I missed qualifying by five minutes.

I did a second Ironman in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho in 2016. A serious bike accident in a timed trial race by Frenchman's Bar Park in 2018 ended my road riding and my triathlons. Then I got more into running. That's how my interest in running the Boston Marathon came about.

Q: *This year's Boston Marathon marked 10 years since the 2013 bombing at the marathon. What was that like?*

TA: There were memorial presentations where the two bombs went off in 2013. We walked from our hotel to get to packet pick-up a few days before the race, and we had to walk past the finish line. When we saw how close one bomb was to the finish line, both my friend and I broke down.

Q: *Were you nervous about running in the Boston Marathon?*

TA: The day before the race, I started getting anxious. I'd heard about Heartbreak Hill between miles 20 and 21. My friend had run the Boston Marathon 14 times before, and said she gets nervous every year. My friend is Catholic. The day before the race, we went to a lovely, beautiful old church. The priest

blessed us for our race the next day.

Q: Tell us about race day.

TA: The night before the race, we went to bed early. On race day, depending on your starting time, they bus you an hour to the start line, where you wait. My biggest concern was to not start too fast, to pace myself, because I had to run 26.2 miles. My pace goal was 10 minutes per mile, and I held to it. As you run, Boston residents come out to cheer you on. It's Patriots' Day there, a holiday. The cheering made me run faster, so I had to slow down. Then I started up Heartbreak Hill—and I made it!

Q: What was it like as you approached the end of the marathon?

TA: Right after Heartbreak Hill, at mile 22, my quads said, "Had enough. Don't want to do this anymore." It was a struggle. I forced myself to keep on pace. When I made that left turn onto Boylston Street—the finish line street—the sound of the crowd was deafening. I felt the energy. It almost seemed like the street was vibrating. I sped up. Passed people.

Once you cross the line, they have you walk several blocks, so the runners crossing the finish line don't cause a bottleneck. Someone gave me a bottle of water. Someone else gave me a space blanket. That night, we joined other marathoners at The Black Rose, a local Irish pub for a post-marathon tradition. We all wore our medals. It felt very 'Boston.'



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TA: We arrive several days before the marathon to explore Boston. We went to a lot of great restaurants and ate a lot of delicious Italian food! Those people in Boston know how to eat. We ate a lot of pasta and salads every day before the race. On race day, I wasn't hungry. The day after the race, we had lobster rolls.

Our hotel was right on Boston Harbor very near to the Boston Tea Party Museum. We walked everywhere. Never took a taxi. Boston Commons was beautiful. We walked along part of the Freedom Trail. We saw the Paul Revere statue near Old North Church.

Q: Will you run the Boston Marathon again?

TA: For me, it's a one-and-done experience. It's quite costly: airfare, meals, and hotel for five nights.

Q: What's next for you?

TA: Three of us have qualified for the New York City Marathon, and we hope to run in November 2024. I've never been to New York and have only seen it in movies and TV. The route starts on Staten Island and you run through all five boroughs. The race ends in Central Park in Manhattan. My friend, Anita, tells me that the New York Marathon is not as difficult as the Boston Marathon.

Q: What advice would you offer to someone who would like to start running, but doesn't know where to begin?

TA: It's never too late. I was in my 40s when I started running and doing triathlons. I got involved through my gym. Find a running group or a running club that has running events. I got my advice from people I met at the gym. Start small. Jog and walk to build up your endurance and lung capacity. I only know one or two people who run alone. I need friends to hold me accountable to do a 15-mile run at 7:30 in the morning. I have lifetime friends from running. It's been an amazing experience.